5/15/80

Dear Harold,

I was just thinking how long it has been since I wrote you last & decided that while I have a few minutes I would let you know whats been happening lately.

These past few months have been quite hectic; this last term at school has been my most difficult yet, as far as the amount of work I had to put in was concerned. My department has a joint program with the Law School whereby certain courses are taught by joint faculty members & can be credited towards a Law degree if the student subsequently attends Law School at Pitt. My advisor, who I sometimes think has a sadistic streak in her, talked me into taking two such courses, Labor Law & Employment Discrimination Law. Both courses were excellent, but I dont think I've ever worked so hard - I just about lived in the law library the entire term. Now that they're over, I must admit I really enjoyed them. I have become quite interested in Labor Relations in the past two terms & I believe that is probably the area of Law I would like to eventually get into. Right now I'm taking a Public Sector Arbitration course & I love it. By the time I finish my masters this December, I'll have 12 credits which will count towards a law degree, so that I could probably finish law school in 2½ instead of 3 years. Now all I have to do is figure out how I'm going to afford to go to school for another 2½ years!

Besides classes, I've been pretty busy with

Finance & Policy committees which, naturally, are the ones with the most work & the most meetings. Being on the inside & seeing how things actually work is an education in itself, but it's also pretty frustrating. I haven't caused any major scandals to be exposed, but I have been making some waves which the other Directors weren't too happy about. At one of the very first meetings I made the Board a bit upset by voting against the hiring of the daughter of one of the Directors. She was fresh out of high school, with no experience or real skills & we had several qualified applicants for the position. I passed out a list of school District employees showing their relationship to any of the Directors & even I was surprised at how many there were not even counting relatives of local Councilmembers or committee members. The Board still voted to hire the director's daughter, & I was put on their shit list, but at least I made public what everyone suspected & caused some of the Directors some embarassment. One other thing I did was to review some of the past audits. It seems as though the auditors consistently find that there is a lack of adequate documentation of expenses when school directors file their expense reports to get reimbursed for conventions etc. Certain Board members were habitually guilty of failing to submit receipts etc, but nothing had been done about it. Well, since January there have been 2 conventions in California & most of the directors went to at least one of them, with all expenses paid. I didn't go, partly because I was too busy but also because I know that they're useless & most people simply make a vacation

using tax dollars for a trip like that. When everyone got back & submitted their expense reports, I took some time to go over all the receipts & found that some had submitted receipts for expenses that couldn't be reimbursed & some had simply not submitted any receipts, or very few. At the next meeting when we were to approve payment to the directors to reimburse them, I distributed lists of all the expenses showing which were legitimate & which had the required receipts to verify them. There was a good bit of arguing, but they were stuck because they couldn't approve payment at the public meeting for expenses which weren't authorized or which didn't have any receipts, so they finally had to give in & pay only those with the proper receipts. As a result, one of the directors, the Chairman of the finance committee no less, who had always been one of those guilty of not submitting receipts, got stuck for a couple hundred dollars in expenses. He's still not talking to me, but at least he knows he can't get away with that anymore. I know there's alot more going on, but I just haven't had the time to really dig into some things; I'm hoping to after I graduate — it's a good, cheap hobby!

While everything else was going on, Alex was running for State Legislator & I was helping him with his campaign. To make a long story short, although we worked like hell, we were slaughtered. Alex had terrible ballot position for one thing; for another, the new council had been forced to raise taxes to keep the borough from going bankrupt. Taxes had

to deteriorate simply because the old council did not want to risk their reelection by raising taxes. As a result, when Alex took over as council President he found close to $400,000 in unpaid bills which the old council had let accumulate. In fact, they had filed a false budget to make it appear as though everything was fine. Unfortunately, most voters arent too intelligent, at least around here. Very few people seemed to care that they had been victims of corrupt officials who had mismanaged the boro & manipulated the money for political purposes. All they cared about was the fact that their taxes were going up & Alex got the blame. Needless to say, we were both pretty depressed over the election results. It's not that we mind losing that much, but to lose simply because NO one understands or cares what youre trying to do is somewhat frustrating. Getting beat that bad caused Alex to do some thinking & pushed him into doing something he had been considering for a while - going back to school for his LL.M. His feeling is that he has already "wasted" several years by staying here just to be in politics rather than pursuing his career, since he has turned down a number of good jobs which would have required him to move or quit politics. I dont necessarily agree with all of his reasons, but I can understand how he feels. This election convinced him that he just doesnt have the support of the voters he feels he needs to accomplish everything he wants, so it's time to move on. Unfortunately for me, his decision means he will be moving to Florida sometime this August, since the only

pretty busy lately, so we haven't had a chance to really talk things over yet & figure out exactly where that leaves us. Who knows, if things work out I may be moving to Florida in the near future. There's some good law schools down there!

About the only other bit of news right now is that I'm working for the summer as a Personnel / Labor Relations Intern for a local municipality. I will be developing a classification & pay plan & revising their Personnel Rules & Regulations & Administrative Code. I also hope to do some work in their upcoming contract negotiations. The job doesn't pay too well, but at least I'll be getting some practical experience in the field. There's also always the possibility that it could lead to a permanent job - the person who did an internship here a few years ago is now the assistant township manager.

Mary said to make sure I said hello for her. Things are going real well for her. She loves her job & will hopefully be finished with her masters in Rehabilitation Counseling next summer. Her husband, who even I must admit is a terrific guy, just started a new job. He's now Chief of Security for Kennywood Park Corp. For a guy his age, that's a pretty responsible position to have attained already. Also, Mary is alot happier about it because Gary has a much "safer" job now than when he was a police officer.

Well, it's just about time for me to quit work & I want to mail this on the way home.

and Lil; my letters may be few & far between these days, but I think about both of you quite often. Take care; my best to you & Lil.

Karen